

[REDACTED]
San Diego, CA 92127

December 8, 2005

Amy Cameron, Consultant
Executive Office
CDE
1430 N. Street, Suite 5602
Sacramento, CA 95814-5901

RE: CAHSEE

Dear Ms. Cameron,

I am a parent of a child that has an IEP. The last 1-1/2 year has been a struggle as I spent time learning the ropes of receiving services and understanding my Child's rights under IDEA. During this journey in Special Education, I have met many parents also on this journey. Together we have formed a group that offers each other support during this difficult stressful journey for our children to benefit from a Free And Public Education.

I have spoken to many students who are trying very hard to pass the State Exit Exams. Many are attempting their second attempt to pass this exam. I cannot express the pain that these children feel in failing this exit exam. Many are not given their modification or accommodations that were supported under their IEP's. These children have told me how they feel like they are failures. Some will even tell you they are just stupid. One girl before her math exam had such anxiety that she ran away from home and started to fight with her parents as the test date loomed closer.

Other children I have spoken to feel depressed and some are under treatment for being suicidal. These are not throwaway children. Many have worked very hard to pass their classes. Why are depriving these children their rights to graduate and walk with their friend to receive a diploma. Many of these children have worked much harder to overcome their different learning styles just to pass their class. Why is California discriminating against this population of students? Why are we not helping these student to continue to a higher education, so they many one day be independent and successful?

In summary, I am asking that your team please consider finding a more reliable method to gauge academic achievement for high school graduation. I feel that one test should not be considered the most reliable gauge to show academic achievement Please delay the 2006 requirements for these high school students to graduate, until we had a more reliable model in place to truly test what these children have learned. Please feel free to contact me at (650) 556-5743.

Sincerely,